



**GREATER BALTIMORE BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
(GBBCC)**

RE: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO SB479**

Good Afternoon Committee Chair Griffith and Vice-Chair Klausmeier,

I am Kendrick Tilghman, president of the GBBCC. On behalf of the members of The Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce I would like to raise my voice in support of SB479. The GBBCC is a membership organization of minority businesses mainly from Baltimore City and County, in addition to Anne Arundel, Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties. Upon review of Senate Bill 479 our board voted unanimously to support this legislation and encourage our members to do so as well. The most common response from our members is that this legislation puts teeth into the MBE\WBE program. They also feel that it makes the program more accountable and transparent to the business that they are charged to serve. Some of our members have participated in the many surveys and disparity studies that the current MBE/WBE program has presented. They take time to respond to the questions and give details of their experiences, only to find no change in the program that shows measurable progress. One comment made by a board member was “*This bill contains everything I recall from my interviews with MBE's over the years AND SOME*”. Many of our members find the current process is very arduous and feel that its designed to keep you out, where SB479 seems designed to include you in. Our members feel the bill has

remedies in place addressing important socio economic factors that influence Economic Empowerment in the Minority Business Community -- including mentoring minority business enterprises, training and a Financial Fund to support training and development of small and minority businesses. There is no doubt that this legislation will be a much needed game changer for MBE&WBE participation in the State of Maryland's procurement system.

Thank you Senator Sydnor for submitting this legislation, as we ask committee members to report favorable on SB479.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kendrick Tilghman', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kendrick Tilghman

President

Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce

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